

**Baltimore County Public Schools**

Office of Psychological Services  
Towson, Maryland 21204

**REFERRAL TO PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES**  
**CONFIDENTIAL**

By law, information in this report is not to be shared orally or in written form with any other person or agency without the consent of the parent or eligible student.

**DATES**

Team 3/7/02 P. Perm 3/7/02  
Rec'd P.S. 8/02  
Service 10/25/02  
Report Dictated \_\_\_\_\_ Report Typed \_\_\_\_\_  
1st assessment 11/17/99  
2nd assessment \_\_\_\_\_  
3rd assessment \_\_\_\_\_  
4th assessment \_\_\_\_\_

**FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL  
SERVICES USE  
DISTRIBUTION**

School ☒  
Central Office \_\_\_\_\_  
Local Office \_\_\_\_\_  
Parents \_\_\_\_\_  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

Name CHRISTIAN ALEXIS Sex M Birth 8/5/91  
School RODGERS FORGE ELEM / DUMBARTON MIDDLE SCHOOL Grade 5/6  
DAD - 7216 LANARK RD. BALTO. MD 21212  
Address MOM - 11 SOUTHFIELD PLACE Zip 21212 Home Phone 410-296-2769  
Father MR. BILL ALEXIS Occupation/Employer \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Mother MRS. NANCY BRITOS Occupation/Employer \_\_\_\_\_ HOME Work Phone 410-435-7006  
Legal Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Referral completed when school attaches one copy of parental permission form, previous test results, teacher and school reports including health status.

Principal's Signature

Date

Susan R. Desi  
March 8, 2002

To be completed by psychologist at time of evaluation or written report.

**LANGUAGE CRITERIA (check as appropriate)**

- ☒ This assessment was administered in the student's dominant language (If in question, consult ESOL Office)  
☐ An interpreter was utilized because the student's dominant language is \_\_\_\_\_ and a certified/licensed psychologist fluent in this language was not available.

**VALIDITY CRITERIA (check as appropriate)**

- A.**  
☒ The assessment instruments utilized are valid for their intended purposes.  
☐ Caution needs to be taken when determining the validity of the procedures because \_\_\_\_\_
- B.**  
☒ The examiner has determined that the assessment procedures are valid for this student and that the results are a valid report of the student's present functioning.  
☐ The following procedural modifications were made when assessing this student to increase the validity of the results: \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Caution needs to be taken when interpreting the results because \_\_\_\_\_

**EXHIBIT****8**

tabbles

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**Reason for Referral:**

Christian was referred for an assessment of his cognitive functioning as part of a three-year review process for students who receive special education services. He was concurrently referred to school based personnel for assessments of his speech/language development and educational achievement levels. The school-based team, to re-determine his eligibility for special education services and to assist with educational planning, will utilize the results of these assessments accordingly.

**Background Information:**

Christian is an eleven year one month old sixth grader who currently attends the Baltimore Campus of the Washington Lab School. He began school in St. Pius and transferred to Rodgers Forge Elementary School where he completed second, third and fourth grade. He began fifth grade at Rodgers Forge Elementary and then transferred to the private placement.

While Christian was enrolled in second grade he participated in system-wide group testing of educational achievement. On the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) he obtained stanine scores of 3 in total reading from related scores of 6 in word analysis, 4 in reading vocabulary, and 3 in reading comprehension. He obtained a stanine score of 5 in total language and 5 in total math at that time. He had participated in specialized reading services upon entry into second grade and received instruction in a group of two and three students. Within the instructional setting his reading comprehension appeared to be satisfactory but his decoding skills appeared to be weak.

By third grade Christian was referred for an individualized assessment of his cognitive ability and learning style due to concern over weak achievement in reading and writing skills. Math appeared to be an area of relative strength. The examiner recorded his cognitive abilities in the high average range overall with verbal abilities in the high average range and visual-motor abilities in the average range of cognitive development. The variation between the two broad areas was not believed to be significant. Among skills assessed in the two areas little variation was noted. He demonstrated relative weaknesses in the areas of short-term auditory memory and alertness to visual details. An additional exploration in the areas of memory and learning noted that Christian's skills in the area of visual memory to be average to high average. He performed in the high average range for memory and learning of sound-symbol associations (although his skills did not improve with trial repetitions during testing). Weakness was again noted in short-term verbal (or auditory) memory. He scored in the low average range on measures of his number/letter memory, sentence memory and story memory. The school team utilized this information and the results of educational testing and declared Christian eligible for special education services. Goals were written to focus on reading achievement and language therapy.

When Christian was enrolled in fourth grade the CTBS was again administered. He obtained a stanine score of 3 in total reading as he had previously but no variability in component skills was noted. He obtained stanine scores of 2 in language and 3 in math. In the

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fall of fifth grade an individually administered achievement test noted average achievement skills in the areas of broad written language and math (standard scores of 93 and 94 respectively) but significantly weaker scores in broad reading (standard score of 73). His parents secured private testing from the Dept. of Neurology; Division of Cognitive Neurology at Johns Hopkins. The examiner noted his overall score for figure-ground auditory testing to be within the average range but he displayed weak phoneme processing and short-term memory skills.

In April 2002 individualized educational testing was again completed. Christian scored within the average range, at the level of expectancy on measures of reading, written language and math.

### **Procedures Utilized:**

Record review  
 Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-Third Edition  
 Bender Gestalt Visual-Motor Gestalt Test  
 Bender Gestalt Visual-Motor Gestalt Test-Recall

### **Clinical Observations:**

His mother brought Christian to Dumbarton Middle School for a pre-scheduled appointment. Mrs. Britos, mother, noted he had come home from school early with an upset stomach. Christian stated he was "ok" and he easily separated from his mother and escorted the examiner to a testing area. Christian was easily engaged in conversation. He noted he frequently vacationed at a family home in Vermont where he enjoys snow skiing and vacations each summer at the beach where he surfs. He has pets at one parent's home and his chores include alternating trash and laundry duty with his brother. Christian noted his favorite foods to be crab and shrimp. He accurately shared his school placement history and regarding academics noted reading and spelling to be difficult, writing was "ok" and math was a strength. Christian noted that listening in any class is tough. Christian proved to be a highly personable student. Throughout the session he displayed a friendly manner and good sense of humor. He made no complaints of illness at all.

The examiner has determined that the assessment procedures are valid for this student and that the results are a valid report of the student's present functioning. During the recall portion of the drawing test the process and he concentration was interrupted by a fire drill and therefore caution should be utilized in interpreting those results. The assessment instruments utilized are valid for their intended purposes.

### **Test Results and Interpretation:**

Cognitive skills: Christian's cognitive skills were measured within the average range of cognitive development as derived from Verbal processing skills in the average range and Performance skills in the average range. Yet higher cognitive functioning, typical to what was

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measured in 1999 would be inferred. The test utilized yields three IQ scores each with a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15. Christian obtained scores of 101, 99 and 100 for Verbal, Performance and Full Scale IQs respectively. These scores reflect no significant discrepancy between the two pockets of skills. The examiner also administered a supplemental test, Digit Span, that allowed for the calculation of an additional index score to reflect Christian's ability to attend and concentrate on orally presented information. He obtained a Freedom from Distractibility index score of 87 that is significantly weaker than his overall cognitive ability. On the flowing chart the mean score for each subtest is 10 with a standard deviation of 3.

Verbal IQ	101	Performance IQ	99
Information	10	Picture Completion	9
Similarities	13	Coding	8
Arithmetic	8	Picture Arrangement	11
Vocabulary	9	Block Design	13
Comprehension	11	Object Assembly	8
Digit Span	(7)		

Overall these results would suggest that Christian is capable of slightly higher cognitive functioning than currently measured. His strongest scores were obtained on a triad of skill areas/subtests (Similarities, Comprehension, and Block Design) that some research suggests are the indicators of pure intelligence. These scores reflect the high average intelligence that is currently inferred and recorded on the previous testing. Within the verbal processing skill area mild variability was noted among skills yet all fell within the average range or better. As previously noted his score for the Digit Span subtest is lower but this score is not included in the calculation of his Verbal IQ. The Arithmetic subtest is utilized for the IQ calculation and while it measures the child's ability to mentally interpret word problems and mentally calculate an answer it is also dependent on short-term auditory memory. As items increased in difficulty Christian consistently asked for items to be repeated. Christian's vocabulary development, fund of information and social reasoning skills were all measured within the average range of cognitive development. He displayed a relative strength in his abstract reasoning skills.

A similar pattern of mild variation among skills was noted in his visual processing skills. Again his relative strength was noted in analysis and synthesis of abstract information, specifically visual detail in the form of block designs. His social reasoning for pictured clues was within the average range as was his attention to critical visual detail. Relative weakness was noted on tasks of interpreting spatial relationships and his short-term visual memory. The later is a less consistent pattern of performance with other indicators and his performance on the task may have been suppressed by slow speed of execution as opposed to a true memory weakness. On a visual-graphic test he displayed appropriate developmental level regarding the quality of completion of the task. Moreover he displayed above average on recall of his drawings after a brief delay. His allocated time to recall was terminated because of a fire drill and therefore he may have performed even better had he not been interrupted.

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Fundamentally Christian's cognitive profile is absent of distinct processing weaknesses commonly seen in profiles of student's with learning disabilities. None-the-less some students with such a level profile do sometimes display learning problems. Also he appears to have general consistency over two separate test administrations yet mild variation is noted. This sometimes reflects another variable may influence the student's success. Christian reported that "listening in any class is difficult" and his score for his Freedom from Distractibility is weak in comparison to his intellect and he displayed weakness related to auditory recall on the current testing. Numerous other assessors reported pattern of difficulty with short-term auditory memory as well. Therefore his learning may be compromised by the composite of subtle weaknesses in short-term memory and spatial reasoning, and perhaps mild attention weaknesses. This may also explain his erratic profile of scores on educational testing throughout the elementary school years. It is not at all surprising to this examiner, from clinical experience, that boys with high average intelligence often display erratic performance because at times they compensate well for their weaknesses due to their overall intellect and at other times have more difficulty balancing all the variables. Many issues such as fatigue, interest level in content materials, background knowledge, instructional presentation etc. may all influence their ability to compensate as well as their cognitive skills. Therefore at a minimal Christian should be recognized as an at-risk learner.

His declaration as a learning disabled student and the educational implications of his needs would be best indicated by his day-to-day performance in the classroom as well as the more formal methods such as test scores more commonly used. Curriculum measures that are diagnostic in nature should also be utilized. Specifically, how well does he demonstrate an adequate rate of reading, accuracy and comprehension on the material being used? Teachers will need to probe his skills and provide remediation and/or adjust the instruction as needed.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations:**

Christian's current level of cognitive functioning is inferred to be in the high average range. He scored within the average or better range on all measures of cognitive functioning. No distinct cognitive processing weaknesses are noted in his profile. His educational performance, particularly in reading achievement has been erratic none-the-less. It is not at all surprising to this examiner, from clinical experience, that boys with high average intelligence often display erratic performance because at times they compensate well for their weaknesses due to their overall intellect and at other times have more difficulty balancing all the variables. Many issues such as fatigue, interest level in content materials, background knowledge, instructional presentation etc. may all influence their ability to compensate as well as their cognitive skills. Therefore at a minimal Christian should be recognized as an at-risk learner. His declaration as a learning disabled student and the educational implications of his needs would be best indicated by his day-to-day performance in the classroom as well as the more formal methods such as test scores more commonly used. The following recommendations are offered to assist with reading instruction.



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Objectives:

- Given Christian's intellect, enriched background and educational support no adjustment would appear necessary to curriculum objectives. While he may require remedial instruction it does not appear that he would require a specialized curriculum.

Methods and materials:

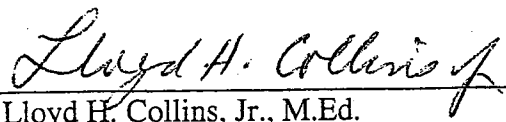
- Strategies such as shared reading experiences, varied high interest materials and follow up activities designed to assure the student's success (such as cloze written tasks with only two answer options) should be utilized to promote his interest and success in reading.
- Strategies such as reciprocal teaching, think aloud and predictive reading should be utilized to promote reading comprehension.
- Social studies and science texts could be utilized to build on content knowledge with the support of Christian's background knowledge while promoting reading skills.
- Christian should be encouraged to read portions of assigned reading while self-monitoring for comprehension and should be encouraged to re-read, as needed, as he goes along.
- Books on tape may be considered for supplementary and adjunct benefit to promote comprehension and tap into Christian's intellect.
- Christian's reading program should be integrated with his written language program to promote understanding and recall.
- Instruction that blends phonics and language experience strategies would appear to benefit Christian.

Time :

- Christian may require extra time for completion of reading activities, particularly if re-reading is required

Evaluations:

- Christian may benefit from pre-test preparation such as summary, rehearsal and study guides
- Test construction should parallel teaching methods

  
 Lloyd H. Collins, Jr., M.Ed.  
 Nationally Certified School Psychologist